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THE QUEBEC SOCIALIST REVOLUTION AND THE NATIONAL QUESTION

- submitted by the minority; edited by G. Rousseau; august 1970.

" At the time of the April '70 elections, a big section of the Quebec workers voted in favor of the P.Q. This election being considered as a referendum for or against independence and the vote of the workers as a positive answer, the Canadian section of the Fourth International at last has deemed it timely to bring the following discussion to the Convention: For or against the slogan "Independent and socialist Quebec?"

However, the debate on the national question has been going on for five years within the section; five years ago the Montreal minority of the time was already advocating the slogan: "For an independent and socialist Quebec." The task in this document is to put the discussion "back where it should be, i.e. not starting from conjunctural causes which lead the section to consider making what looks on the surface like a turn towards independence, but from a marxist analysis of the national question in Quebec specifically, and to draw the necessary conclusions and perspectives for the future. What are the tasks that the Quebec revolutionary vanguard will have to take on in the years to come?

The main statements of the discussion of the past five years were the following: 1. Should the revolutionary vanguard adopt the slogan: "For an independent and socialist Quebec," or should it limit itself to the principle of self-determination? 2. Does the dynamics of the Quebec revolution require a Quebec section of the Fourth International?

If at the Convention, the pan-Canadian section accepts the slogan "For an independent and socialist Quebec," as is quite probable, and considers that a Quebec section of the Fourth International is not required, then there is something amiss. For it is only one of the two things: "1. The turn taken by the section is purely pragmatic and is to follow the working class trend; 2. or the turn is due to a serious and exact analysis of the national question in Quebec; therefore to the realization that the Quebec social formation is specific and requires inevitably that the strategy and tactic by suited to Quebec. But then, how can the rejection of an independent section be justified? As a matter of fact, it does not seem anti-Trotskyist to us to say that the Quebec social formation being of a specific character, a specific dynamic of the Quebec revolution is required! In the name of an abstract internationalism which portrays Ottawa as a common enemy of the Quebec and English-Canadian working classes, the majority excludes some elements of the world revolution, by denying or refusing to take into account particular features of the development of the Quebec social formation.

Quebec Class Society -- Product of Imperialism

Quebec, a French colony from its beginning to 1760, was to keep the colonial status under the English rule. Although Confederation (1867) formally did away with the colonial status of Quebec, all the characters of colonial status remained due to the domination of the English Canadian and international imperialist bourgeoisie. Quebec was industrialized at a slightly slower pace than the rest of Canada, but the delay had extensive consequences. The primary and tertiary "industries" are favored in that province. The sector of extraction of raw material was first developed by English capital and after mainly by American capital. The sector of consumers' goods remained for a long time in the hands of the native bourgeoisie (1840-1914). Whatever there is of processing industry is also in

the hands of foreign capital. The unevenness of the economic development, resulting from imperialist domination, makes this colonial economy very vulnerable to world fluctuations of the capitalist economy. The Quebec proletariat, product of an industrialized society although keeping the character of a rural society (which the clergy perpetuated through the educational system), had to resolve its contradictions by its own revolutionary action.

After the failure of the 1837-39 revolution, Quebec still has in 1970, to accomplish certain tasks of the bourgeois revolution, as "the national problems reappear with more virulence because of the imperialist crisis." Right from the beginning, the colony, a society of feudal character, was managed according to the mode of capitalist production. The Quebec economy, developed by its imperialist neighbours and to their profit, is integrated as colonial into the North American capitalist economy. For this reason, the decision-making centers are out of reach -- at the level of research or investment, etc., so that the Quebec government has not much of a say in the development of its economy. Its powers are even more limited due to the domination of the central government, Ottawa, political instrument of the English Canadian bourgeoisie.

In Quebec, imperialism finds assured super profits because of the cheap labor and the concessions that it gets for very little money from the Federal and Provincial governments. Not only are the natural resources given to it, but in order to assure better exploitation, fiscal exemptions, reduced rates in the case of purchases of energy sources, etc., are added to it all. There again, the wage earner is the one to pay.

The last few years, the Quebec state has acceded to the rank of capitalist entrepreneur. By its "régies", like Hydro-Québec, le Gaz naturel, etc., by its investments into various enterprises through the Société générale de financement and other financial institutions (mixed enterprises), or directly like in the case of Sidbec, Soquem, etc. which compete with private enterprises. The state is the biggest employer in Quebec: public employees, teachers, hospital employees, etc. Caught into the squeeze of imperialist demands and the sharp struggle of its proletariat, it attempts to take the role of the strong state.

Its task of watch dog of imperialism is becoming more and more difficult; if the super profits which have attracted imperialism disappear, the latter will be less inclined to sink roots into the Quebec state. The active agent in the struggle against the superprofits is the working class. The more the working class demands wage increases and social measures, the more difficult the role of watch dog of the state is made and the more imperialism is incited to seek its superprofits under other skies. This process becomes a vicious circle, for an aggragation of the situation takes place. If there is a proletarian revolutionary direction to these struggles, the outcome might very well be the taking of state power by the proletariat.

As the Quebec economy is dominated by imperialism (semi-colonial economy), and the population of Quebec forms an island of different language and culture into an anglo-saxon sea, the Quebec class struggle has taken the form of a struggle for national liberation. The proletariat is doubly alienated from capital: on one hand as participant in the

capitalist mode of production, therefore as being deprived of the direct possession of its production; and on the other hand suffering as a member of a different community from destruction of its culture and its language. The specific conditions of the historical development of the Quebec society are such that the Quebec proletariat suffers more from the effects of the exploitation of the capital and resent them more than its English-Canadian homologue. Therefore, the struggle of the Quebec proletariat for safeguarding its national identity contains a potentially revolutionary dynamic, because it is situated at the level of the state political power.

Fundamentally, this struggle is directed against Capital; but this is not a priori evident to the proletariat; and it is only through the intervention of a conscious vanguard at the level of the national struggles that this proletariat can become conscious. In fact, it is only by acquiring the working class consciousness -- by being conscious of its historical interests -- that the proletariat can become conscious of the relation between its struggle for the safeguard of its national identity and its struggle against Capital. It would be erroneous to believe that the struggle for national liberation will necessarily and inevitably grow into a revolutionary class struggle. This national struggle is going to be the way through which class consciousness will develop; national consciousness and class consciousness are dialectically tied together, but the development of the national consciousness does not imply a priori the parallel development of class consciousness; this revolutionary class consciousness can only develop through the intervention of the revolutionary vanguard. As long as this revolutionary vanguard is not there or will refuse to take the leadership of the national struggles, the nationalist workers bureaucracy, bourgeoisie and petit-bourgeoisie will be able to divert the revolutionary potential of the Quebec proletariat from its historical path into reformist paths.

The importance of Quebec for the North-American revolutionaries resides in the political impact on the English-Canadian and American proletariat of a revolutionary development in the struggle of the Quebec proletariat. The rise of nationalism in Quebec, the political events tied to them -- elections, mass demonstrations like that of November 69 -- stirs the interest of the North-American working class. (The coverage given to the electoral campaign of April 1970 by the North American and international press is an example of this interest.) The Quebec working class is already the vanguard of the workers' struggles in North America as the American Black workers are); and it might become the revolutionary vanguard, if a vanguard is developed in its midst and gives its national struggle for liberation the direction towards the only possible way out, towards the socialist revolution.

SPECIFICITY OF THE QUEBEC SOCIAL FORMATION

The capitalist mode of production has developed in a particular fashion in Quebec, -- i.e. in function of the needs and interests of the foreign imperialist bourgeoisies, rather than for the profit of a native bourgeoisie. As a result, the various classes and social layers are marked in their development by certain characteristics which make them distinct from the English-Canadian classes and social layers. The Quebec social formation is specific, because of its characteristics which are the result of a specific Quebec historical development. To understand this specificity is to understand the process of the Quebec revolution.

A.- The bourgeoisie

As a result of the domination of the Quebec economy by the imperialist international bourgeoisie, an industrial bourgeoisie comparable to that of English Canada did not develop in Quebec. Nevertheless, due to the economic boom of the post war period, in which the Quebec economy expanded rapidly, a certain financial bourgeoisie developed.

In spite of the fact that the national bourgeoisie controls the state apparatus, it does not really have control over the development of the Quebec economy. The most important levers -- control of taxation, foreign policy, etc. -- are in the hands of Ottawa government. The canadian bourgeoisie controls and utilizes them for its own profit. To this fact is due the importance of the development of the Quebec state apparatus during the last decade. Through this apparatus, some sectors of the national bourgeoisie are in a position to keep a certain independence from the Canadian bourgeoisie. From this point-of-view, the struggle of the last ten years on the part of the Quebec bourgeoisie is meaningful. The objective need of this bourgeoisie for a strong state made some sectors accept a nationalist ideology. These sectors are trying to bring other social classes to endorse this ideology through the parti québécois.

B.- The petit-bourgeoisie

The traditional sectors of the petit-bourgeoisie -- the parochial elite, the small business men, etc. -- are nationalist by tradition. They are expressing a conservative nationalism, reactionary and clerical and take their social conceptions from the social doctrine of the Church. Associated to the latter, they constituted the base of the Duplessis regime, -- regime tending towards corporatism - which has marked deeply the Quebec society. Concentrated mainly in the rural regions, these sectors have greatly decreased in size and do not exert anymore the political influence of the old days. The decline of the St-Jean-Baptiste society shows enough the loss suffered in these sectors.

With the development of the modern state appeared new sectors of the petit-bourgeoisie. Quebec does not escape this rule and with the development of the state apparatus, these layers have gained great importance. This apparatus is (proportions being taken into account indeed), one of the most if not the most developed in Canada. State administrators, professionals, high officials form this sector of the petit-bourgeoisie.

It is greatly in the interest of these sectors to see the state apparatus develop and even become politically independent. Efficient builders and administrators of the apparatus, they are potential allies of the nationalist bourgeoisie. Some prominent members of these sectors, Levesque for example, have already joined the ranks of this petit-bourgeoisie and have become its faithful lieutenants. Nationalists and competent capitalist administrators, they want to make the Quebec state a strong, competent state in the service of the national bourgeoisie.

C. The marginal layers

Marginal as not being part of the fundamental process of the capitalist production - even if the latter is to them indispensable -- these layers do not any less constitute an important social force; and the

mass movements in which they are organized might play a determinant role. (The French movement of May 68 is just one spectacular example of this fact).

We will deal here with the two groups which exerted an influence on the Quebec working class in the last few years: the student movement and the teachers.

The students

The Quebec milieu and the student movement present certain characteristics that differentiate them in a striking manner from their English-Canadian counterparts. Even if Quebec evolved generally along the same lines as the other advanced capitalist countries, the specificity of its socio-economic development and its semi-colonial status have only precipitated this evolution and sharpened its contradictions. The Quebec bourgeoisie has prepared and carried out an educational reform identical in its aims and means to that of the other cpitalist regimes, but it is less capable to assume the consequences of such reform specially as its economy is unbalanced. Quebec is the furnace in which the heat of the crisis and contradictions of capitalism reach a particularly high degree. The Quebec students have been the first to feel it and in an extremely brutal manner.

Being carried out in the framework of the "quiet revolution" under the Lesage government, starting with the creation of the Ministry of Education (64) and with the Parent report, the educational reform and the modernization of the structures aimed at forming the necessary cadres - with technological and administrative competence - indispensable to the building of the modern technological society.

It was marked by an" extraordinary explosion of the student population without comparison in the advanced capitalist countries. The number of students at the post-secondary level went from 30,000 in 61-62 to 135,000 in 68-69. In less than 10 years it has multiplied 4.5 times. Important social layers thus have access to university education, the majority coming from the newly born working class. The CEGEPS therefore become more and more a roundabout way of selecting the students.

The impossibility for a semi-colonial economic structure to effectively absorb even part of this student mass, the sudden loss of illusions before the failure of the reform of the educational system and of the bourgeois values tied to it, all these contradictions expressed within a relatively brief period, crystallized the Quebec students revolt. The attempt to make the school system financially sound caught Quebec capitalism in its own trap. It was soon proven inefficient and even useless to try reforming the conditions through the students unions.

Overnight, the Quebec students carried the struggle onto the political plane. The first mass movement strongly inspired by the May-June events in France, developed in October 68, starting with the occupation of the CEGEPS and the universities. L'UGEQ fell or, let us say, went to pieces (March 69). In the Quebec context, political struggle means national struggles; Then we see enormous mobilizations of the student movement, for example, against the universities serving the cause of

imperialist bourgeoisie (French McGill, March 69). The movement against bill 63 in November 69 is spectacular by its size and its scope; one of its newest elements is the enormous mobilization of college students, having to face very early the problems of a more and more insecure future in society.

The rise of the mass student movement around the national question and more precisely around the language question does not allow any rapid assimilation with English-Canada. Even if the student movement is rather little politicized in the traditional sense of the term (for example, there is not any serious political group with well defined program, orientation and structure), its level of militancy is very high and each demonstration is marked with confrontations with the cops. This combination of a low level of politicization and of high degree of militancy makes this movement extremely available to an efficient intervention of an organized vanguard. The November 69 events and the struggle against bill 63 have proven that a handful of our militants could bring several thousands of demonstrators into the streets, for the first time in Quebec, organize and give a structure to a marshal squad and force the realization of a common front with the other tendencies of the left. On the other hand, the influence of Thomism remains deep and manifests itself in the habit of "theorizing" on the spontaneous experiences of the movement. (for example, its contribution to spontaneism was the elaboration of a theory of social dynamics of the left!) Nevertheless, this Cartesian mania of theorization brings a search of the theory which could make this movement extremely available to a dynamic and attractive presentation of Trotskyst ideas.

Finally, if the student movement keeps few illusions on the bourgeois educational system, it still accepts a certain "theory of the stages" in the struggle for the national liberation. It is as ready to come down in numbers on the street as to act in a militant fashion or to vote massively for the PQ. Therefore, for lack of a serious alternative, the student movement has been electorally channelled into a bourgeois nationalist party.

The Quebec student movement, more disposed to fight and more numerous than its English-Canadian counterpart, has influenced the milieu of the workers and its organizations. We can give a s an example of this fact the "armed occupation" of Domtar at Windsor Mill and at East Angus. It is also under the pressure of the student movement that the uniom leadership has taken a stand officially or officiously in favor of the French unilingualism and for support to the PQ in April 70 elections. The teachers, another marginal layer of the Quebec society, has also been radicalized by the impact of the student movement.

<u>The teachers</u>

The Quebec teachers are the only ones in Canada to participate in a union. For many years, the union negotiations bring them to confront an employer that claims to work for the common good and to use the strike as a means of making known their rights of salary earners. Total, partial or rotating, all these strikes have the same common trait, they are extremely militant. These often long and hard struggles make the teachers the vanguard of the union movement.

The influence of the nationalist student movement on the teachers

movement has contributed to the radicalization of this layer of the Quebec society. Let us mention their support and active participation in the movement against Bill 63, and their intervention on the political scene in April 70 -- intervention that more or less favored the PQ. The fact that the teachers particpate to some union common fronts (like the action against Bill 8, to quote the most recent one), and that a current mainly composed of young teachers has appeared in the CEC asking for the union action to be redefined and become a more politicized action tends to bring the teachers nearer to the industrial workers, not only at the level of the struggle, but also in their social aspirations.

D. The Quebec working class

The Quebec working class, concentrated mainly in the Montreal region, is essentially the product of the internal migration of the rural population towards the cities, as a result of the destruction of the agricultural economy by foreign capital. This population, for a long time subdued by the clergy, brought not only its working power, but also a whole tradition of Catholicism, of corporatism and Cartesianism. This mentality is to be found also in the other layers and classes of the Quebec society. It is characterized by the desire to systematize and theorize all the social phenomena that concern the population (eg. the "second front" of the CSN, which seeks to engage the organization in a political struggle, was preceded by the "moral report" by Pépin and by numerous other reports at the time of the conventions of the organization. These reports were conceived with the idea of giving an ideological basis to the political intervention of the organization.)

Then there is no rejection of theory, but rather a search for a rational explanation and this facilitates specially the intervention of a vanguard at the level of analysis (This is also true concerning the youth and if the theory is easily accepted, doctrinaire schematization is repelled with passion.)

The English-Canadian working class has not received this Cartesian formation. It is rather characterized by pragmatism -- resulting from its culture and Anglo-Saxon education - Gompersism and reformism. The Gompersism comes mainly from the coming into Canada of the American unions. On the other hand, the immigration of British workers brought a reformist tradition, of the Labour Party type. (Immigration in Quebec has played only a minor role in the formation of Labor.)

Effective unionism has come late in Quebec; after the second world war. It is characterized by:

1. The transformation of the CTCC founded by the clergy for counteracting the "harmful" influence of the "foreign organizations" -- into a real union. The process of deconfessionalization, set in motion after the asbestos strike in 1949, ended up in the creation of the CSN in 1962. This long period of domination by the clergy has contributed a lot to establishing a Cartesian and corporatist mentality into the Quebec working class, as it is mentioned earlier.
2. Through the implantation of the industrial unions affiliated to the CIO, the FTQ, the second union in Quebec, has its origins in English Canada, the CLC, which is also affiliated to the American CIO. This affiliation brought it to adopt the tradition of this unionism expressed

in the form of Gompersism. Then, the FTQ and the CSN have never had any labor party tradition and have always been confined to a strictly "trade-unionist" struggle, which leaves the working class free from the classical reformist tradition.

3. Through a tradition of hard and violent struggles, the workers have fought for acquiring better working conditions and better wages, and also for defending their right to unionize. The period of Duplessis regime in in this respect, remarkable. During this period, the government is openly anti-union, and the armed cops are often used for breaking strikes and beating the workers. (ex. asbestos strike in 49, Murdochville strike in 1957, etc.) This tradition still exists among the working class and is not to disappear for some time in this society in which the workers must fight first to preserve their gains and then to obtain more.

The harshness of the political regime, the instability of the Quebec economy which is shown in the rate of unemployment consistently higher than in English Canada, brought some sectors of salary earners traditionally non-unionized, to unionize. That is how since the beginning of the 60s, the government employees, the hospital employees and some of the professions, like the engineers of Hydro-Québec, form unions or join workers organizations rather than form their independent union. This represents, in some cases, a unique phenomenon, both in Canada and in USA. Their affiliation to workers organizations brings them closer to the working class and even more favors the solidarity of various sectors.

In the last few years, a division is taking place in the unions, mainly in the FTQ, CSN and CEQ, division based on a political ideology, if not into a right wing and left wing. The process of differentiation is not so advanced in the CEQ as in the CSN. The question was openly dealt with at the spring 70 convention of the CEQ. The politicized and radical wing, i.e. the wing that seeks to depart from the traditional conception of unionism, is recruited among the young teachers. In the CSN, this differentiation exists in the discussion and in practice, as a result of the "moral report" by Pépin, which was the starting point of the political action in the CSN. Since then, this polarization has not stopped and does not cease to progress; Pépin polarizing the right wing and Chartrand the left (even if the said left wing does not always agree with the ideas or the conduct of Chartrand). The idea of the "second front" -- political front -- is to bring the workers to class politics, by struggles at the municipal level or on other problems which concern them directly. The left wing which calls itself revolutionary seeks the support of the FTQ and gives the latter its support, a competing and international union. (The attack against Chartrand and Audette, lead by the right wing and asking for their expulsion was founded on the accusations of collaboration with a competing international union.) It is because of the pressure exerted by the left wing that the CSN took a stand in favor of unilingualism and against Bill 63. The sharp character of the struggle in the CSN will eventually bring the crushing of one of the two wings by its rival, or a split within the union.

The intensification of the polarization into two political poles has taken place parallel to the rise of nationalism in the working class. The polarization, the radicalization in the workers unions -- and this applies to the FTQ -- and the workers, are the result of the growing sharpness of the national question. The decisive impulse was given by the mass movement, students, teachers, against Bill 63. If the working

class did not act concretely, it nonetheless, took a stand - through the unions -- and took the lesson of the defeat. This radicalization of the Quebec working class (which takes place mainly among the young workers at the present time) through the national question and its most daily aspect , the language question, is added to a high degree of fighting spirit and makes this class even more available to the struggle.

It is this availability of the working class in the face of the national question that the radical union bureaucrats channelled and directed towards a bourgeois nationalist party. The reasons which brought these bureaucrats to support the PQ will be given later. The sharpness and depth of the national question is such that these bureaucrats are in danger of being overwhelmed by the mass actions on the part of the working class, which could escape their control. They attempt to resolve the problem by supporting a bourgeois party, the PQ which represents the "SOLUTION" i.e. the program of a bourgeoisie which aims at being modern and capable of taking "the fate of the nation" in its own hands.

NATIONAL SPECIFICITY AND REVOLUTIONARY STRATEGY

One of the questions raised in the present discussion is to know whether a specific revolutionary strategy exists for Quebec (in the framework of the world strategy of our epoch) or whether there is only one strategy at the pan-canadian level (Quebec included) to which tactical specificities are added for Quebec? This question poses the problem of the importance of the specificity of a social formation in the elaboration of a revolutionary strategy.

In the preface to the French edition of "The Permanent Revolution", Trotsky deals with the subject in the following terms:

"...It is false that world economy is simply a sum of national parts of one and the same type. It is false that the specific features are "merely supplementary to the general features", like warts on a face. In reality, the national peculiarities represent an original combination of the basic features of the world process. This originality can be of decisive significance for revolutionary strategy over a span of many years.(....) But the astonishing thing is that he (Stalin) does not notice that national peculiarity is nothing else but the most general product of the unevenness of historical development, its summary result, so to say. It is only necessary to understand this unevenness correctly, to consider it to its full extent, and also to extend it to the pre-capitalist past. A faster or slower development of the productive forces; the expanded, or, contrariwise, the contracted character of entire historical epochs -- for example, the Middle Ages, the guild system, enlightened absolutism, parliamentarianism; the uneven development of different branches of economy, different classes, different social institutions, different fields of culture -- all these lie at the base of these national "pecularities". The pecularity of a national social type is the crystallization of the unevenness of its formation. ....this theory (of permanent revolution) rested on the law of uneven development, not in its abstract form, but in its material crystallization of Russia's social and political pecularity." (Our emphasis)

(--Preface to The Permanent Revolution(Englishedition).

We can see by this quote the importance given to the originality of a national social type, resulting from the crystallization of uneven development. We have to understand the role played in reality by this social originality, in the elaboration of a revolutionary strategy.

So, the foundations of the national specific characters are not abstract entities:

1. Since its formation, Quebec is a colony dominated politically and economicelly either by a colonial power or by imperialism. As a result of this domination, Quebec has, on the one hand, only a weak bourgeoisie as an imperialist bourgeoisie has developed in English Canada, and, on the other hand, the industry of extraction of raw material is overdeveloped compared to the processing industry.
2. The Quebec society has been dominated for three centuries -- domination reinforced by the English rule -- by ultra-reactionary clergy; this clergy controlled not only the religious life, but also the whole social life. The finished expression of this domination was Duplessis regime, a regime having a corporatist leaning, installed by the clergy and the compradore bourgeoisie. The English Canadian working class has never known such a political regime.
3. The culture and the language of the majority of the Quebec population are different from that of English Canada.

" The crystallisation of the social and political originality in Quebec has taken the form of nationalism and of a strong current of independence vis-à-vis Ottawa...This is how the class struggle in Quebec has taken the form of a national liberation struggle within a highly industrialized and proletarianized nation." (Doc. by M. Mill, Jan.23,70)

Although Quebec and English Canada are both ruled by the capitalist mode of production, Quebec, because of its different historical evolution, presents certain characteristics which exclude the possibility of rapid assimilation with the oppressing nation: Quebec has been recently industrialized and has been oppressed for a long time. The class struggle in Quebec has taken the fom of a national liberation struggle. It therefore has a different form than in English Canada which has its own characteristics. If we admit these facts without admitting the consequences; i.e. that the taking of state power by the proletariat will be accomplished according to a different dynamic, a different strategy --strategy that is included in the world strategy of the present period -- we do not understand the process of the class struggle and the importance of the specificity of the social formation.

For the majority, the national question is only an added phenomenon to the class struggle, an important one indeed, but only so just the same. An enormous wart! Finally, the majority would rather go without it, as it did for 4 years, it would be so much simpler. It keeps on seeing the proletarian struggle in Quebec as a traditional class struggle, i.e. directly opposing a modern industrial proletariat to Capital. In its outlook, the class struggle in Quebec and the aim to achieve, the taking of state power, can be accomplished there according to the same strategy as in Canada.

The demand for an independent state is in the eyes of the majority only a question of tactic, a better means of propaganda: it denounces the PQ as a bourgeois party and asks for the formation of a labor party. And we are back into the traditional scheme -- demand for the labor party, denunciation, opposition, split, etc, etc. -- The demand for an independent state is only a tactic favoring the propaganda; it must be integrated into a strategy of the seizing of power by the Quebec proletariat. The national Question in Quebec is potentially revolutionary; it is not necessarily so. Without the intervention of a revolutionary vanguard which understands this potentially revolutionary dynamic, the Quebec proletarian struggle might in the long run know a setback which would throw it back on the tail end of the class struggles, and this for many decades. The intervention

of the vanguard must aim at increasing the class consciousness of the proletariat and show the proletarian way to the solution of the national question.

The working class acquires a proletarian class consciousness only through its own struggles and this is done if a revolutionary vanguard exists which the class gives its confidence to, and which is capable to educate it in these struggles. Unfortunately, such vanguards do not exist either in Quebec or in English Canada; on its part, the most conscious part of the English speaking working class carries its struggle against the English bourgeoisie through the seizing of political power in Ottawa -- even if this struggle is liable to take a reformist character, for example, the taking of power by the NDP -- the same way the most conscious part of the Quebec working class -- even if it is small in numbers -- carries the struggle against Ottawa, not for taking power, but so that Quebec might become its own political state. As the events are unfolding, the Quebec bourgeoisie is the class that will profit most from this struggle, not the proletariat. The role of the Quebec and the English Canadian revolutionary vanguards will be to lead the Quebec and English Canadian working classes to power. This is the best help that these working classes can give each other. Trying to join the struggles by presenting it as a simultaneous struggle against the "common enemy" can only confuse the struggle that the Quebec working class is carrying, a class that has also to fight against its own bourgeoisie, even if the latter is very weak in the face of the big imperialist bourgeoisie.

The Revolutionary Vanguard Vis-a-vis the Parti Quebecois

The attitude that the revolutionary vanguard must take towards the PQ is to be determined by its understanding of what the PQ represents on the social plane and of the role it is going to play in the development of the Quebec society in the next few years.

From the ideological point-of-view, the PQ is and will remain a bourgeois formation. But it will play politically, although partially, the role of a colonial social-democratic party. This does not mean at all that it is or could become the working class formation, but that it will play the role of channelling and directing the working class struggles. We must not forget that the PQ is the political formation of our nationalist bourgeoisie and that in its negotiations with the imperialist bourgeoisie, it must show itself capable of neutralizing the action of this class. The danger from the PQ is that it can direct the national liberation struggle into the path of reformism and of illusion. Even if in the long run, a stabilization of the social struggle is not possible in a too prolonged absence of a revolutionary vanguard capable to give a pole of attraction to the most advanced layers of the working class and of carrying the struggle to its revolutionary conclusion, the Quebec working class could sink into apathy and apolitism for many years.

> "This protracted period of instability and social crises does not imply the automatic victory of proletarian forces or of revolutionary peasant forces led by a Marxist leadership; that is, the automatic establishment of workers' states. As in the case of equating the beginning of the colonial revolution (under bourgeois or petty-bourgeois nationalist leadership) with its victorious conclusion under proletarian leadership, any idea that this process will occur automatically or inevitably within a certain time limit necessarily leads to a distorted estimate of the actual relationship of forces

and replaces scientific analysis by illusions and wishful thinking. It presupposes that the objective process will solve by itself a task which can only be solved in struggle through the subjective effort of the vanguard; i.e., revolutionary-socialist conquest of the leadership of the mass movement. That this is possible in the very process of the revolution, and in a relatively short time, has been adequately demonstrated in the case of Cuba. That it is not inevitable, and that without it the revolution is certain to suffer serious defeats or be limited at best to inconclusive victories is demonstrated by much in the recent history of other Latin-American countries; for instance, Bolivia, Argentina and Guatemala." ("Dynamics of World Revolution Today" p. 10)

In order to understand the rise of the PQ and why 25% of the population (including a strong percentage of workers) supported it in April 70 elections, we have to understand what is nationalism as a class phenomenon. The nationalism of oppressed people is the expression of their social discontent. The struggle for independence is tied with the struggle for the betterment of the standard of living, cultural and economic, The national liberation struggle is the expression of the class struggle.

When comrade A.Y. writes:

" (...) It (the political committee) proposes the adoption of the slogan " For an Independent Socialist Quebec " now in 1970 and not in 1966 when this was the rallying cry of the petty-bourgeoisie and not the working class. As for the first two points of argument, four years have amply shown their absurdity. Nationalism, in Quebec rather than revealing a petty-bourgeois character, has come forward as a means of the (sic) working class expression, against which the bourgeoisie, Canadian as well as Quebecois, has struggled. (Interna' dis.bulletin 1970 #4 p.6)

This paragraph reveals three errors of the majority:

1. The empirical method of the section confronted with the demand for an independent Quebec, demand tied with,
2. the lack of understanding of what the national question represents in the dynamic of the Quebec revolution and
3. an overestimation of the homogeneity of the Quebec bourgeoisie and the imperialist bourgeoisie in general at the expense of its internal divisions.

The latter error brings an underestimation of the possibilities for the bourgeois and petit-bourgeois formations to rally the mass of workers behind them by using, if necessary, an anti-imperialist demagogical language.

The empirical method of the Canadian section, in dealing with the national question in Quebec, has made us the revolutionary rear-guard, and not the vanguard in the national liberation struggle of Quebec. The turn that is proposed to us is in the present social context, nothing but an opportunistic turn, in order not to be bypassed by the working class itself. For this very important turn, (better late than never) is not at all based on an understanding of nationalism as a class phenomenon in Quebec, but on the results of the bourgeois elections of April 70. Might we be entitled to another turn if the electoral situation changes? Here is an example of the understanding of the Quebec nationalism on the part of the majority: "Nationalism in Quebec rather than revealing a petit-bourgeois character, has come forward as a means of the working-class expression..." If stupidity could kill... How can someone affirm with so much seriousness in such a serious document (!) that Quebec nationalism has not a petit-bourgeois character, but has become the voice of the working class! Is anyone trying to say to us, without too much ridicule, that there exists a nationalism of petit-bourgeois character and another of proletarian character! It is too bad for the amateurs of schematic classifications that nationalism is neither one nor the other in itself, as it does not have a revolutionary character in itself. It is the expression of the social discontent of a society

by imperialism, and if a revolutionary proletarian direction is not to be found in order to orient the struggle towards a revolutionary solution through the class, it will only serve the interests of the social class which already dominates the society, the bourgeoisie.

The Quebec financial bourgeoisie, weak as it may be, is concentrated to a high degree, which gives it more coherence. The technocratic sectors of our bourgeoisie and petit-bourgeoisie, which some of the prominent leaders of the PQ come from, like Lévesque, Parizeau, etc. find their interests into an independent Quebec. In the present period, in which the North American economy meets more and more difficulties, these bourgeois and petit-bourgeois sectors might try their chance for more autonomy, in playing off one imperialism against the other. i.e. They would play Canadian imperialism against American imperialism, to the advantage of the latter. They are not carrying an anti-imperialist struggle -- this does not keep their radical talk against one imperialism from deceiving the workers -- but are making deals for obtaining more political autonomy and a greater part of the profits made on the back of the Quebec workers in return for which the victorious imperialism will get some advantages. In order to achieve that, in order to negotiate, a serious and respectable party is needed showing some good will and consideration of the rights of private property for the sake of impressing; it is necessary to reassure the imperialist bourgeoisie by giving good guarantees. The PQ in its short life, has done its utmost to acquire as much as possible all these qualities. It has succeeded and even the leftists, in any number will not make it lose face and even less make it split. The perspective accepted by the majority of a quick decay of the PQ, the working class bypassing it in other formations is far from being realist. This error rests upon an underestimation of the Quebec bourgeoisie and of its nationalist wing and consequently a lack of understanding of the role that it can play in the process of the Quebec national liberation struggle. This error brought them to predict, since 1966, a quick bypassing by the working class, of the bourgeois and petit-bourgeois nationalist formations. In 1970, we are facing a bourgeois nationalist formation with an electoral base in the working class. All this talk is obsolete (we only have to read in "Vers la libération du Québec" in the part devoted to the perspective of a labor party, p.23, and see that the future conditional is used constantly. This shows their lack of understanding of the Quebec social formation. It cannot be objected that it was impossible to foresee such a development, (what use would the marxist method be?) since the texts of the minority in 1966 correspond in their general content to the events that happened.

When the working class gave its important support to the PQ in the 1970 elections, it did so with the blessing of their unions. We might get the answer that the union bureaucrats have once more betrayed their working class base! It may be necessary to remember that the unions controlled by these bureaucrats are the mass organizations of the working class and that these have given all their confidence to their leaders. Such bureaucrats have miscarried many revolutions! What was the role of the unions in the formation of the PQ? Well, not only did they not oppose its formation, but they indirectly helped it by not doing anything towards building their own political party. After having lost their illusions with the left wing of the liberal party at the beginning of the 60s, we see that they have recovered them in the PQ. We must not be so naive as to believe that the same scenario will be repeated. If the actors are the same, the play is different. First, it would mean having illusions and second, it would mean not understanding the role of the unions towards the PQ.

It would be deluding ourselves, for we cannot expect, at least at this time to see splits of left wings in the PQ because there is no pole of attraction at the moment, no revolutionary alternative presented by a group capable, by its seriousness and capacity of leading struggles, to attract the young and radical militants who leave the PQ. Second, the radical union leaders have desired the formation of the PQ and have even helped it. This formation relieved them of the responsibility of building their own class party and allowed them to play the role of opposition within the PQ and be the pressure group; for that they are using and diverting the AVAILABILITY TO THE STRUGGLE ON A DAILY BASIS OF THE QUEBEC WORKERS FACING THE NATIONAL QUESTION.

We could ask ourselves: Why did they not assume the national liberation struggle themselves by building a labor party? As an answer, we can say firstly that there is a lack of class tradition in the Quebec working class and its unions. Their tradition is rather that of lobbying; second, the fascination that some of our native bourgeois ideologues exerted on the union leaders. Moreover, relieved from the responsibility of the direction, these organizations can always throw the blame on the PQ if things go wrong. Having chosen the role of conditional supporters, they have succeeded quite well until now. Wishing to avoid the struggle being transformed into a mass movement of the working class, these unions will play more and more the role of abating the class struggle; the fear that the struggle of the Quebec workers could take a revolutionary turn is as great in these bureaucrats as it is in the bourgeoisie.

In this perspective, the role of the PQ is of opposition vis-a-vis some sectors of the national bourgeoisie and of recuperation and direction of revolutionary energy in a combative working class. For these reasons, and because it is rooted into the Quebec reality, the PQ represents the greatest danger for the Quebec working class.

What should the work of the revolutionary vanguard of Quebec be in order to make the working class regain in the long run the control of its struggle for national liberation and to bring it to its revolutionary conclusion, the socialist revolution? As it has been outlined, there is no revolutionary vanguard at the present time (even nationalist) rooted in Quebec and having a mass audience there. Our task will be to build such a vanguard in the next period. The actuality of the national question for the student and working youth facilitates our intervention in this milieu. Numerous militants, specially the youth, are searching for a solution to the problem of the national question and that is where they find the means to radicalize themselves.

The militant base of the PQ is composed of the militant youth. When it is not election time, the most radicalized part of this youth will tend to leave the parliamentarist and electoralist cadres of the PQ for more militant, direct action. It is this radicalized youth that has to be brought first to revolutionary Marxist pplitics. Because of the daily character of the national question, the opportunities of carrying struggles that are tied to it are not rare, even if at the beginning, the actions and their scope will be limited because of limited forces. These struggles will attract to us those militants who seek not only a sound analysis, but also an organization capable to take up and initiate struggles and lead them to victory.

If we confine ourselves to a perpetual denunciation of the PQ and of the union bureaucrats for their support of the PQ, we will not succeed in

building a vanguard that includes more than a few dozens militants and we will not be able to really sink roots in the milieu. Such a policy would make us a "satellite" of the PQ, in that all our interventions would have the PQ as a political axis, would revolve around what it does and what it does not do, what it is and what it is not. This policy would attract few militants into our orbit. The logic of this policy is hope for the dissolution of the PQ which we could pick up the pieces of. But by whom could this dissolution be provoked?

1. Either by us, which is not probable. On the one hand, we do not know of such radical wing within the PQ; on the other hand, even in this eventuality, we would have to be a powerful pole of attraction. At this time, in our opinion, it is highly doubtful.
2. By the union bureaucrats who would build a labor party from what is left This alternative is as improbable as the first. We had better get used to the idea that the PQ is the political formation of our nationalist bourgeoisie, that it is and that it is going to be so for a very long time.

The only fruitful policy for us is to orient our action towards the militant radical youth, students and workers. This vanguard will be built in action, action which without being spectacular, will make the link between the daily manifestations of the national question and the domination by imperialism.

For example: 1. The recruitment by the RCMP on the campus could be a good subject for propaganda and agitation. 2. The question of the role of the university in society in general, and particularly in the relations that it entertains with big industry. Since Quebec is dominated by foreign industry...These are only two examples; we could give many more. A revolutionary vanguard is not built in a few weeks; it takes time, but if we do not start building it right now and what is most important, in the right way, it is sure not to exist ever.

THE TURN OF THE ISO ?

" Our task is to project a program which exposes the insufficiency of the Parti Quebecois and points toward the labor party the independent party of the trade unions... as the next logical step along the road to independence of Quebec. This concept that independence of the nation lies throug h emancipation of the class, and vice versa may be expressed through the demand: For an Independent, Socialist Quebec, Launch the Labor Party. (Internal Discussion bulletin #6 Aug ust 1970 p.23

If it were not for the date, this excerpt of a text of the majority could be confused with another one written by the same majority before the "turn". We believe that the majority is right when it says that it has not taken this turn but only readjusted its aiming, adapted its tartic. To be frank, it is rather an opportunistic swing, for we do not see any real difference between the present policy and that which will probably be adopted at the next Convention. 28 pages are devoted to justifying the insertion of five words (For an Independent Socialist Quebec) before the sempiternal appeal to the formation of a labor party.

Really, it is to the point that we ask ourselves whether the comrades of the majority live in reality. 1. The analysis given in their document of the events taking place in Quebec in the last two years is unsound. (Oct. 68, Nov.69, formation of a mass nationalist movement among the students, the teachers and the young workers, the rise of the PQ and support givent to this party by the union bureaucrats and an important part of the working class). The number of demonstrators is exaggerated. There was not at any time a concept of a red university during the Oct.68 occupations, or

a notion of duality of power during the struggle against Bill 63! etc. etc. 1. No understanding how the demand for independence can have a revolutionary content, the majority already gives one to this demand. 2. These major events do not seem to play any role. The LSO-LSA does not accomplish any real rectification of its old orientation.

What is proposed to us as a perspective for work? Denounce the PQ and appeal for the formation of a labor party "launched" by the unions which at this time are playing the role of workers' "opposition" within the PQ. All our propaganda, (leaflets, pamphlets, etc.) will be centered on these two themes on which will be grefted the demand for an independent socialist Quebec, (and this particularly on demonstrations, because then we have a "mass audience" - indeed everyone can see the banners and it is more revolutionary, these days, to be nationalist).

We believe, comrades, that if we understand the present period and the present social situation, a more precise and efficient perspective for work must be proposed. Our work in this period is to build the revolutionary vanguard. The perspective of building the labor party through the unions is very far. Admitting that it would not be so far, the party would nonetheless be a reformist party -- we do not know of any example of a non-revolutionary union building a revolutionary political party -- and we would fall back into the scheme of the past period, opposition, split, etc.

The last World Congress of the Fourth International defined the present period as being the time for the revolutionary vanguard to take initiatives in the mass movement, in the daily struggles, inasmuch as this is possible, even if at the beginning these are necessarily limited. Why then contribute in bringing water to the mill of reformism, when we can build the revolutionary vanguard by our work?

At this time, to continue the old policy is to condemn ourselves politically and organizationally to stagnation. This stagnation cannot be avoided if not by a policy aiming to taking the direction of the struggles and of the mass movement. But we cannot impose ourselves as the leadership; leadership is to be won and the only way to win the leadership is to demonstrate that we can assume the task efficiently. The only way to demonstrate is to participate, to initiate the struggles. The opportunities are numerous, since all the problems of a "normal" capitalist society are given more scope by the national question.

So, in the student and the teachers' milieus, a campaign of agitation can be started around the crisis of bourgeois values. For example, the role played in this society by the universities, the role of the educators in the process of education, the students and education -- their integration in the process of production. This could be a campaign for the control of education by the teachers and the students. Campaigns can be carried on the campus explaining and relating together the struggle for the liberation of the Quebec people, the struggle of the Vietnamese, of the Palestinians and other nations engaged into a struggle against imperialism. Such campaigns would contribute to developing the internationalist consciousness of the most militant among the students.

Whatever our intervention, we must always be identified as revolutionary Marxists and members of the Fourth International.

The Independent Section

All along this document, we have tried to point out the specific

features of the Quebec social formation: we have characterized first its economy as being a semi-colonial economy because it is dominated by foreign capital; we analysed the characteristic features of the social layers and classes and finally, the particular role played by the PQ in the rise of nationalism and its evolution in the future.

For us, the particular character of the Quebec social formation requires a Quebec revolutionary strategy, strategy that fits into the framework of the strategy of the world socialist revolution for the present period. Recognition of the specific path of the Quebec revolution brings us to conclude the necessity of a Quebec section of the Fourth International. We do not make a question of principle of it as the majority does, but of revolutionary effectiveness. Such section, living in the daily social reality is the most apt to apply strategically and tactically the transitional program determined by the objective and subjective conditions.

To pose the necessity of a Quebec section of the IV is to recognize that the Quebec revolution will develop according to its own dynamic and therefore that this requires its own revolutionary organization in the framework of the World Party of the Socialist Revolution. The majority, in spite of the fact that a strong current among the Quebec working class has given its vote for independence, in spite of the fact that the LSO has adopted or will adopt the slogan "for an independent socialist Quebec", considers as a question of principle the organic unity of the Canadian and Quebecois proletariat within the same revolutionary organization. Its argumentation has not changed since 1966. An excerpt from "The Organizational Character of the LSA-LSO and its Constitution" gives the basis of the argumentation on which their thesis is built:

" The revolutionary party unites the workers of the two nations, Quebec and the rest of Canada, in a common organization. That is necessary since the task is to lead the workers struggle to victory against the Canadian capitalist class whose power structures are rooted right across Canada from one ocean to the other and centralized in the State apparatus at Ottawa. The socialist revolution is the common task of the workers of French Canada and English Canada and requires the maximum unity, coordination and strength, realizeable only through a centralized combat party. The liberation of the Quebec nation will only be won through a socialist revolution which overthrows the yoke of foreign exploitation of Quebec, supported by Ottawa." (p.2, translated from French)

It can always be repeated that only the world socialist revolution will put an end to the exploitation of nations by other nations and, in a more general way, to the exploitation of man by Capital. There are not many revolutions that such repetitions, as true as they may be, have helped progress! The problem is posed concretely and in these terms: what will be the specific path of the Canadian and Quebec revolutions in the world socialist revolution? The majority establishes an identity between the Canadian and Quebec revolutions. According to this majority, the Quebec workers and the Canadian workers must be part of the same revolutionary organization because they are dealing with a common enemy: the English Canadian capitalist class, whose power structures are rooted through the whole country from one ocean to the other and centralized in the state apparatus in Ottawa."

It is true that the English Canadian capitalist class and the American imperialist dominate the Quebec society and economy. It is also true that the fact of Quebec being part of the political whole called Canada is of

importance. But to schematize and reduce the problem to the formula "same enemy, same struggle" ! In its national liberation struggle, the Quebec people does not fight only against the English Canadian capitalist class, but also against the American imperialism and against Capital in general; the complexity and the dynamic of its struggle reside precisely in the fact that its enemy is Ottawa, Washington and its own native bourgeoisie.

Either the majority does not see the specificity of the social formation in Quebec, or it does not see that this specificity implies a specific dynamic of the Quebec revolution. Obsessed by the fear of being contaminated by it (although if there is a petit-bourgeois nationalism and a proletarian nationalism, would it not be affected by the latter?), the majority considers nationalism not as the expression of the class struggle, but as a supra-class phenomenon. As long as its interpretation of nationalism will remain mecanistic and fatalistic (i.e. In the imperialist epoch, all national struggles cannot but grow into a socialist revolution - which is underestimating the role of the national bourgeoisie and the role of the vanguard besides), as long as it will keep to mechanistic reductions as "same enemy, same struggle", it also will be able to write: "Although the struggle of the Quebec workers has many significant and particular aspects, it is inevitably directed towards merging with the struggle of their English Canadian counterparts, whose problems come from the same source..." to demand an independent state and deny that a revolutionary strategy exists for Quebec by not recognizing the necessity of a Quebec section of the Fourth International!

"It is impermissible to confuse the right of nations to separate freely with the usefulness of separating for this or that nation at this or that moment. The latter problem, the party of the proletariat must resolve for each particular case in an absolutely independent way, from the point of view of the interests of the whole of social development and the interest of the proletariat's struggle for socialism." (translated from Oeuvres Complétes, Lénine tome 24, ed. sociales, Paris, 1958, pp. 305-6.)

Lenin poses the problem and indicates the criteria that must be underlying this resolution. These criteria are effectively underlying our decision - at least that of the minority - concerning the demand of the independent Quebec state. The Quebec society is in great part industrialized and proletarianized; its proletariat has to suffer all the misgivings of a capitalist economy many times more than its English Canadian counterpart, an economy that is in addition dominated by foreign capital. As time goes, it has to carry harder and more violent struggles against this capital in order to obtain a vital minimum or an improvement of its material situation, to defend its culture, its language, etc. This original situation brings it to the front line of the North American proletariat, by the character of these struggles as much as by the violence accompanying them. In this situation, the demand for independence, to which demands aiming at raising class consciousness must be tied, must make the struggle for socialism progress. The demand for independence must be seen in this perspective.

The minority sees the national liberation struggle as integral part of the revolutionary strategy which will bring the Quebec proletariat to socialism, as the majority sees it as an appendage - important indeed - but as another tactical aspect of the revolutionary strategy, and not as the expression of the class struggle. In this perspective, the "turn" of the majority towards independence is to be considered as being purely tactical: since an important part of the Quebec proletariat has voted for independence by voting for a bourgeois nationalist party, it means that the

proletariat can be mobilized on this question. This also explains that the majority always declares that the Quebec proletariat is tied to the English Canadian proletariat in its struggle against a common enemy and that it has to be tied in the same revolutionary organization. "ALthough the struggle..." (We underline the previous quote).

In order to give a basis for their policy, the majority quotes the example of Tsarist Russia and the policy followed by the Bolsheviks. We totally agree that we have to learn from the lessons of the past, but unfortunately this comparison is completely without any reason, except that it proves us right. Here is an excerpt of "The Russian Revolution" by Trotsky, in the chapter on the national question and that is quoted in the document "LSA-LSO Relations":

"Lenin early learned the inevitability of this development of centrifugal national movements in Russia, and for many years stubbornly fought - most particularly against Rosa Luxemburg -for that famous paragraph 9 of the old party program which formulated the right of nations to self-determination - that is, to complete separation as states. In this the Bolshevik Party did not by any means undertake an evangel of separation. It merely assumed an obligation to struggle implacably against every form of national oppression, including the forcible retention of this or that nationality within the boundaries of the general state. Only in this way could the Russian proletariat gradually win the confidence of the oppressed nationalities. "

But that was only one side of the matter. The policy of Bolshevism in the national shpere had also another side, apparently contradictory to the first but in reality supplementing it. Within the framework of the party, and of the workers organizations in general, Bolshevism insisted upon a rigid centralism, implacably warring against every taint of nationalism which might set the workers against one another or disunite them. While flately refusing to the bourgeois states the right to impose compulsory citizenship, or even astate language, upon a national minority, Bolshevism at the same time made it a verily sacred task to unite as closely as possible, by means of voluntary class discipline, the workers of different nationalities. Thus it flatly rejected the national-federation principle in building the party. A revolutionary organization is not the prototype of the future state, but merely the instrument of its creation. An instrument ought to be adapted to fashioning the product; it ought not to include the product. Thus a centralized organization can guarantee the success of revolutionary struggle-even where the task is to destroy the centralized oppression of nationalities".

From this excerpt (and many others), it is demonstrated that the Bolshevik party was against the federati e principle within the revolutionary organization. We are also against it ! Nobody is asking and ever asked for a federation for the Canadian and Quebec trotskyst movement. What we are asking for is a national Quebec section of the Fourth International.

The majority thinks that Canada is a replica of the Tsarist Russia and its policy is that of the Bolshevik party. The only point of comparison is that in both cases, a centralized state keeps one or many nations under its political and economic domination. Nevertheless, we have to recognize that major differences have to be established: 1. Can we seriously pretend that 1970 Quebec is comparable to 1917 Georgia? 2. The population of the oppressed nations in the Tsarist empire was composed of a majority of peasants; the proletariat was recruited mainly among the population of Great-Russia itself. The policy of the bolshevik party is to be explained just in the fact that the Russian working class was the most developed and moreover the most combative.

The Quebec population is in its majority composed of a working class relatively organized and in great proportion independently of the English Canadian workers and it constitutes a specialized labor force more and more. The Russian working class was the vanguard in relation to the oppressed nations. The Quebec working class is almost as developed and certainly much more combative than the Canadian working class. If there is any influence at the level of the struggles, it is more the Quebec proletariat influencing its English Canadian counterpart. 3. The Bolshevik party demanded complete unity of the workers of various nationalities in all the class organizations including indeed the revolutionary party itself. To the contrary, the pan-Canadian section of the IV supports the demands of autonomy on the part of Quebec organizations of the working class - considering them ,justifiably, as measures favoring the development of class consciousness in the Quebec working class and consequently the understanding of the necessity of socialism. 4. On the question of "same enemy, same struggle" we have already answered. The policy of the Bolshevik party conceived from the conditions of Tsarist Russia cannot be blindly applied to the Canadian and Quebec conditions.

The aim in describing the specificity of the Quebec social formation was to demonstrate: on the one hand that this specificity requires a strategy particular to Quebec in the framework of the world strategy), different from that applied to Canada, and on the other hand that the demand for independence is integrated in this strategy. A pan-Canadian section of the IV cannot give an efficient and adequate direction in the unfolding of the daily struggles. The tactical decisions in the process of the struggle are more efficiently taken by comrades living in the social milieu considered. Presently, the political central direction is not only geographically remote, but also composed of persons who, by their different cultural and linguistic heritage cannot pretend directing the daily struggle. When there are important decisions to be taken quickly, the leadership takes them without possessing all the necessary elements. The result of this is wrong tactical decisions; for they do not correspond to the reality of the struggle and might very well cut us off (eg. the appeal for a general strike).

The question of the specificity of the Quebec strategy is obviously the key element in the necessity of a Quebec section of the IV. The Canadian comrades should not take offense at such a demand. It is not a question of lack of confidence or anything else, (the Belgian or French comrades participating in the same international as the British do not tell the latter what to do in the daily struggle, even if they all participate in the elaboration of the world strategy of our epoch!). This demand rests upon political reasons and on the necessity of a maximal revolutionary efficiency.

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On the Worldwide Youth Radicalization - from an educational presented to the Toronto branch LSA/LSO.
by K. Kelly.

This educational is on the discussion going on in the Fourth International on the international youth radicalization. The discussion was opened at the last World Congress with the document The Worldwide Youth Radicalization and the Tasks of the Fourth International submitted by the United Secretariat. It was supported by several sections, including the Canadian, and endorsed by sympathizers in the U.S., but some criticisms arose and only the practical conclusion, that winning youthto the program and sections of the FI was the central task before us, was adopted.

Since then, other documents, mainly by the French comrades, have come out and several experiences have occured which enable us to better evaluate the various positions. In this educational, I want to go into the differences in the two basic positions and relate them to these experiences. It will be a bare outline rather than a comprehensive report because it's simply impossible to encompass the worldwide youth radicalization in all its ramifications in a 20 minute educational, or go into the experiences in each country.

There's general agreement that the youth radicalization was brought on by the crises of imperialism manifested in the War in Vietnam, the colonial revolutions, the intensified interimperialist competition, the attack upon the living standards of the workers, and the increasingly obvious role of the educational system, not as an ivory tower where one gets an unbiased and "liberal" education, but as a tool for grooming youth to fit into the capitalist production line. Under the pressure of the third industrial revolution, calling for ever more skilled and qualified workers to run and manage profit-producing machinery and resources, the bourgeoisie has found it increasingly necessary to openly manipulate education to suit their needs - and fast: "to cut off the feet if they're too long and stretch them if they're too short," as a recent article in Young Socialist Forum characterized high school education. Not only has this resulted in increasing alienation and proletarianization of intellectual labor, but it can't even meet the needs of capitalism - as shown by the inadequacies of the Quebec CEGEPs (Colleges d'Enseignement Generale et Professionnal). This necessity for mass-produced qualified workers has also increased the social weight of the student sector - there are eight million university students in North America alone - more than the number who graduated from every university in every country in the last century. So the youth radicalization is rooted in the general structural and political crises of capitalism and in the last analysis can only be solved by the resolution of these crises - the socialist revolution.

A second feature of the radicalization is the failure of the Stalinist and social democratic organizations to respond to it and to attract youth. By and large, the radicalization has bypassed these bankrupt formations.

A third characteristic is a genuine internationalism, concern for and solidarization with struggles such as the Vietnamese, Cuban and Afro-American.

A fourth is the indefinite character of the student milieu - students are neither yet workers nor bourgeoisie, although the vast majority face the perspective of becoming workers. More leisure, less job pressure and discipline, enables them to develop political consciousness more quickly, but it also carries over into light-mindedness; ultraleftism and organizational inabilities.

The differences in the International cover several basic points which center around the projection of the Red University as a strategy and the necessity of building independant youth movements. The first question is : do students have particular or homogenous interests which can mobilize them and unite them as students?

Yes, says the United Secretariat resolution: students as such have several common interests - inlearning the truth - in having the right and freedom to consider all theories and to hear all views as part of their education. In eliminating streaming compartmentalization and formalistic grade structures which prevent them from following the courses of study they choose. In a decent standard of living while studying whether through guaranteed jobs, free tuition or a combination of both. And in the interest of the university serving those attending and working at it, and further, in its serving the majority of society and the revolutionary forces in that society rather than a minority of warmongers and profit- hungerers.

The French comrades say students have no such interests and can only be radicalized around exrta-university factors. Michel Mill and his Canadian tendency go so far as to say "that practically no single major student struggle in the world has been triggered around what are strictly speaking, student problems..." This outlook contradicts not only reality, but these comrades themselves.

First, there's the development of the Comites d' action lyceens, in France, which played a major role in the French events of '68, and in the words of the French comrades, were able to because they " mobilized the high school students against the senseless and maniacal discipline which the administration imposed ... denounced the political function of that discipline, in the framework of a general application of the Fouchet reform of the educational system." Second, there's the student struggle in Mexico, which began as a demand for safeguarding university autonomy and ended as a real crisis for the regime to the point where it was forced to murder and imprison the student vanguard to preserve itself.

Third, there's the CEGEP crisis in Quebec, '68 (and here Michel shows a very short memory) which began over the revelation by the Parent Commission that the CEGEP's were hopelessly inadequate, the inability of their graduates to find either places in universities or jobs, an almost two percent increase in interest on student loans and a cutback in loan funds. These purely student issues touched off the most widespread and highly politicized student struggle in North America up to the antiwar university of this spring. Furthermore, it was the first in North America to gain significant non-student support in the trade unions.

Another case is that of the High School Student Representation Committee in New York City representing 275,000 high school students, initiated around a High School Board of Review student demands for the right to wear clothes of their choosing, buttons, distribute literature, parent-student grievance committees. This coalition is now working more and more closely with the Student Mobilization Committee and third world committees. And this is not to mention the dozens of smaller struggles I came across in looking through back issues of the Vanguard and Militant and Young Socialist Forum - in Ottawa over equal representation of students and faculty on departmental committees; the discipline crisis at University of Toronto; food crisis at MacMaster University; the rehiring of teachers at Ryerson Technological Institute.

All these struggles posed the question " who controls the university." Through the fight for these specific student demands, students gained experience in how to conduct mass democratic meetings, how to formulate defensive slogans and to attract popular support. Further, they came to see their struggle as part of the growing radicalization of other sectors -- women, national minorities, the Vietnamese.

Which brings us to the second point -- is there a revolutionary strategy for the student movement, or,in the words of the Ligue Communiste, just a " juxtaposition of democratic themes and university demands "? Yes, the revolutionary strategy for the student movement is the Red University, the concept of turning the university

into an organizing center for building revolutionary struggles, for linking student struggles with those of the workers and oppressed minorities toward a combined struggle for power. The Red University concept is transitional in that it seeks to reach students on their present level and through demands understandable to them, bring them to the understanding that the university is part of capitalist society and that to win and safeguard these demands they ## change that society. Second, it gives them experience and a taste for the socialist university of the future, run in the interests of the majority. Again, the French comrades and their tail-enders in the Mill tendency seem to turn themselves around several times both in terms of experience and in their own documents. In fact, I found so many contradictions in the documents I began to wonder about the translation.

must

Basically, their position seems to be that either there are no student demands or student demands are incurably reformist; therefore students must be organized only in conjunction with the working class or the revolutionary party. This, of course, fails to explain how to get reformist students or non-students tied up with the revolutionary sectors.

Experience has dealt rather sharply with this concept. First, the UGEQ - occupation experience. According to Mill, this proved that "broad, defensive and representative structures" were dead and the way to organize students henceforth was by " spectacular actions of small groups around political problems." However, UGEQ died precisely because it was neither broad, defensive nor representative, and therefore unable to lead the occupation movement. It encompassed only its bureaucratic leadership, made no attempt to involve the activists of the occupation, had no concept of demands or organization that could have heightened and prolonged the struggle, and it represented no one.

The anti-war universities in the States are the converse of this and the first test of the Red University -- transitional strategy. First of all, the antiwar university mobilizes students around the issues closest to them -- the right and opportunity to learn the truth about the Vietnam revolution, to eliminate ROTC (Regular Officers Training Corps), to expose and bar war research from the campus, to kick the military-industrial recruiters off campus - i.e., to turn the university over to the students, faculty and workers there to organize as they see fit, in their interests.

This was exemplified in the mass meeting of 15,000 at Berkeley which voted to " constitute the university as a center for organizing against the war in South-east Asia, to protect jobs and wages of university staff, to protect present and future academic status of the students," that is they took into consideration "purely" student issues, as well as the broader issues of the war.

Second, and the whole crux of the transitional program, the antiwar university enables students to link up with the forces that, if mobilized, could end the war, GI's, working people, third world people. It enables them to transcend the campus with the aid of the campus facilities - presses, radio stations, newspapers, funds, and with the aid of experience gained in organizing the campus. Further, it provides an example for other sectors of the population -- if the students can exert control over their institutions and lives, why can not the GI's, Third world communities, workers and so on, do an even better job ? The antiwar university provides a model for broad, defensive, representative organizations - where decisions are made by mass meetings composed of elected representatives of departments, of campus areas, and interested communities. As for struggles being sparked by " spectacular actions of small groups," whether you call it provocation-escalation or "dare to struggle, dare to win " - we

saw its submergence not only in the antiwar universities, but in Toronto on May 31. The reason our comrades in the YSA were able to participate in May and make fantastic steps forward compared to other political tendencies in the tremendous upsurge in the antiwar movement, was because of their understanding of the transitional program and how to apply it.

A third question posed in the discussion is -- should the students be mobilized if the workers are not ready to join the struggle - won't the students just be smashed and victimized ? Again, a transitional program is the answer to that, a program that attempts to link the student struggles with the workers - the success of which can not be determined at the onset of any struggle - should France '68 not have taken place because perhaps the workers would not answer the call to the barricades ? If I remember correctly, that was a surprise to most. Should we call off the antiwar university because they may not be successful ? Are the third world and women studies programs won on the campuses useless because they have not mobilized the working class ? To hold up one section of the struggle for the others is neither the dynamics of revolution nor the policy of our movement. As shown above, and aided by a transitional program, student struggles tend to grow over into general revolutionary struggles.

A fourth important criticism of the French comrades is that the document has incorrectly called this a " preparatory and propagandistic " period. The document explains this: " The sections of the FI are as yet too small to lead the masses in their own name and under their own banner in a decisive struggle for power." This in no way implies an abstention from the revolutionary movement; it is simply another way of stating that our main task is to recruit to and build the revolutionary party, the only missing ingredient in a world ripe for socialism, the lack of which was very apparent in May '68 in France, for example. And of course, the best way, the only way, to recruit to and build the FI is through our conscious intervention in mass struggles, through the application of our transitional programs to win not only the youth, but the masses as a whole to the revolutionary program and the struggle for power. Even the Bolsheviks did not assume power in 1917 in their own name, but in the name of the Soviets, which had been won to their program. A closer example is the SMC -- do the comrades suggest that the YSA, which is in the programmatic and organizational leadership of the SMC, abandon it and call for the antiwar movement to follow the YSA ? Such would be the height of sectarian, movement-wrecking.

Our intervention in mass movements is two-fold -- on the one hand we support and build mass non-exclusionary, democratic, united front movements, and on the other, we try to win these movements to our program and to win recruits to the revolutionary youth and party. To misinterpret this perspective as perching "on the heights of piously accumulated theoretical acquisitions" as do the French comrades or simply "interpreting " mass movements, as does Comrade Michel, seems to me either willful misunderstanding or overanxious about the capacity of the vanguard to bridge the gap between the crisis of capitalism and the necessary leadership of the socialist revolution. How does the foregoing discussion affect the projection of building separate youth movements to make the most of the opportunities to win youth to socialism? It's only logical, if one sees no separate interests of student youth and no need for a transitional program for them, to have the perspective of recruiting youth, especially working youth, straight to the revolutionary party. This is the perspective of the CL comrades. Although I've heard rumours to the contrary - if anyone knows, perhaps they can comment on it in discussion. However, we see that youth, especially campus youth, are in the vanguard of the revolutionary struggles, around the antiwar, university , third world and women's liberation. The projection of the strategy of the Red University not only involves these students but helps them to

reach out and link up with the rest of their generation, in the armies, in the factories in the communities. A separate youth movement gives us an organizational form to win the revolutionary youth to, and give them a revolutionary education, to involve them in struggles with a socialist perspective, and eventually to recruit them to the revolutionary party.

Two last criticisms I want to mention. One, that the document does not spell out specific transitional demands. A transitional program does not predict which demands will come to the fore at each particular conjuncture. There has been ample specification of demands in the YSA campus program, around the antiwar university, and in our activities such as the summer jobs campaign. Second, that the student movement has no history or memory. But the fact that it has gone through various formations from social democracy-type SDS's (Students for Democratic Society) and SPU's (Student Peace Union) to the break-up of these formations, and in the States, is now joining the revolutionary socialist movement, the YSA, shows that the student movement does progress, does learn from its experiences. Although, if the comrades mean that the student movement cannot substitute for the revolutionary party, as the union movement cannot, then, of course, they're correct.

In closing, I want to read a bit from Jack Barnes, SWP Organizational Secretary in the June 5 Militant, which nicely sums up the experience so far with the Red University transitional program.

"But the basic strategic concept--winning and then using the vast resources of the American universities as a powerful base from which to link up with the coming mighty social struggles against American capitalism - has been given a trial run, its validity and the experience will not be forgotten. Another valuable addition to the capital of the entire movement has been the appearance on many campuses of broad strike councils. They implemented the tasks decided on in mass campus meetings and represented the forces of the upsurge in a way no single organization could. This form will undoubtedly be refined improved and used on a broader scale at the next stage of the struggle. This kind of democratic leadership committee which can unite forces in a large struggle and be viewed as the legitimate authority of a mass upsurge is an important example for GI's, third world communities and the labor movement...." The need for and the role of a nationwide revolutionary socialist youth organization with a political program and strategy that links campus rebellion to the key political fight against American capitalism can be understood today by thousands of radical students who were not sure of this a month ago."

June 9th 1970